

HAMAN

Adapted by

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Based on the Book of Esther in the Bible

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Anxious, heavy BREATHING.

TITLE: 483 BC. Susa, the capital of Persia. During the reign of Xerxes I...

EXT. UNKNOWN - DAY

Extremely CLOSE ON two EYES. Round. Shifting. Left, right. Left again.

A calm, confident VOICE speaks up. The narrator, HAMAN (40's), is full of bravado and strength.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
I was chosen.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL more of his solemn face.

CUT TO

TITLE: HAMAN

INT. KING'S COURT, SUSAN, PERSIA - DAYS

The court is grand. Many pillars, lots of color and decadence. XERXES sits on the throne. Quite a few PEOPLE linger.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
My name is Haman, honored official  
in the court of Xerxes.

Haman literally stands behind someone and can hardly be seen.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
All I ever wanted was to be a  
vessel to the gods. Used for divine  
purpose. Living in great esteem.

Two MEN near Haman pull out knives. He doesn't notice.

MAN 1  
whisper, whisper, KILL THE KING!

CLOSE ON another man, MORDECAI (50's) leans in, hears the men, and sees the knife.

Mordecai leans away and whispers into a woman's ear. QUEEN ESTHER. She leans away and whispers into Xerxes ear. His eyes go wide. As the heads part, Haman has watched the whole thing.

On a SHINK from a blade, the whispering heads drop, revealing the Court. The would-be assassins kneel in front of Xerxes throne, Esther standing at his side.

Then the heads of the assassins fall off.

Haman watches Xerxes. Then Mordecai. But nothing happens. Mordecai gets lost in a crowd. Haman seems confused.

INT. KING'S COURT, SUSAN, PERSIA - DIFFERENT DAY

Xerxes sit enthroned in a shaft of light. He raises a hand and...

HAMAN (V.O.)  
Xerxes, possessed of the gods, took  
notice of me, plucking me from  
court and promoting me above all  
others.

...Haman, humble, but standing tall, shuffles forward.

Xerxes raises his hand, mouths something in a Charlie Brown WAH-WAH, and the people kneel. Haman beams. Mordecai stands among the crowd at court in the shadows.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
Even the man who had saved his  
life.

EXT. KING'S GATE - LATER

More people kneel. Haman double takes. One man doesn't kneel in his presence. Mordecai! Haman frowns.

Then it happens again.

And again.

And again.

A small crowd forms around Mordecai. They shuffle off. The same crowd leans in around Haman.

CROWD  
whisper, whisper, JEW!

Haman's eyes widen in surprise. On his gaze, CAMERA ZOOMS IN on Mordecai... still standing.

HAMAN (V.O.)

Jews were notoriously obstinate.  
Troublemakers.

(pause)

In that moment, I knew. I had  
yearned for divine purpose... and  
so I had been chosen by the gods...  
to avenge! Jews were the very  
barbarians who slaughtered my  
people generations ago. I would  
take back the honor ripped from the  
Amalekites!

A TAPESTRY moves to act out the Jewish attack on the  
Amalekites.

ZOOM OUT TO REVEAL

INT. HAMAN'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Mordecai through a window. Haman WAH-WAH's to his WIFE,  
pointing at Mordecai, miming about Mordecai not kneeling for  
him.

INT. KING'S COURT - DAY

HAMAN (V.O.)

And I would make sure the Jews  
couldn't rise against Persia. The  
gods had made me... Persia's  
savior!

Haman whispers in Xerxes ear.

HAMAN (V.O.)

whisper, whisper, like Egypt. Like  
Babylon. Jews revolt!

Xerxes listens, eyes narrowing, and hands Haman his  
all0important SIGNET RING.

Haman oversees a SCRIBE scratching on a PAPER and THUNK.

EXT. KING'S GATE - LATER

The paper says "By order of Xerxes I... KILL ALL JEWS. In 10  
MONTHS."

Mordecai's eyes go wide. He WAILS like a wounded animal, rips  
his clothes, and falls to his knees.

ZOOM OUT TO REVEAL

INT. KING'S COURT - CONTINUOUS

Haman smiling at the window. A light shines on him as if from the gods themselves.

HAMAN (V.O.)

A King's decree could not be  
undone. Even by the King himself.  
Persia would be rid of all Jews.  
And our lands would be safe from  
insurrection forever.

He CLINKS a goblet with Xerxes, who hardly notices him.

Through the window, there are WAILS and confusion in Susa.

But Mordecai, among the crowd, turns to CAMERA. The only still, thoughtful presence.

CLOSE ON Mordecai leaning in to WHISPER to Queen Esther. Her eyes widen with surprise, a hand flying to her mouth.

INT. KING'S COURT - DAY

Esther bows before Xerxes. There's some WAH-WAH between them. He nods.

CLOSE ON Haman, a COURTIER leaning to WAH-WAH in his ear.

HAMAN (V.O.)

And the gods kept smiling! The King  
and Queen commanded me to dine with  
them, just the three of us, at a  
royal banquet.

A table is set in the court, Xerxes and Esther at either end. Haman comes forward eagerly and sits between them.

FOOD parades past him as the Xerxes and Esther WAH-WAH again.

HAMAN (V.O.)

And to my pleasant surprise, she  
asked for another banquet in my  
honor!

EXT. KING'S GATE - SAME DAY

Haman leaves, incredibly self-satisfied. But then he spots Mordecai. Not bowing again. And he nearly blows his top.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
One man dared to defy the gods.

INT. HAMAN'S HOME - SAME DAY

Haman WAH-WAH's to his wife and some FRIENDS. Obviously complaining.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
But I was a vessel.

His wife and friends WAH-WAH back.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
And by divine inspiration, it was suggested I build a gallows for the rebel and ask Xerxes to have him hanged.

Haman nods, almost comically, and a GALLOWS builds up and takes over the scene.

INT. KING'S COURT - DAY

Haman strides in, big grin on his face. He opens his mouth to speak, but before he can, Xerxes interrupts with some WAH-WAH.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
Before I could make my request, Xerxes asked... what should be done for a man the king delights to honor.  
(pause)  
Who could the king mean...

His eyes light up.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
Who would the king rather honor than me?

As he describes his answer, images of himself doing the things pop up and clutter the screen.

HAMAN (V.O.)  
I suggested a royal robe worn by the king, a horse the king has ridden, and the royal crest placed on his head.  
(MORE)

HAMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Then the man, with all his gifts,  
should be paraded through the city  
streets by a most noble prince who  
declares 'This is what is done for  
a man the king delights to honor!'

Xerxes, barely visible thanks to Haman's vision, WAH-WAH's something with a smile.

The visions POP and Xerxes points to a book with a picture of the two assassins and... Mordecai.

EXT. KING'S GATE - SAME DAY

CLOSE ON a humiliated Haman. PULL BACK TO REVEAL Haman leads the horse as Mordecai is honored by the crowds.

HAMAN (V.O.)

Were the gods mocking me?

(pause)

No. This was a test. And I knew...  
these weren't royal honors. This  
was his death knell. I was  
witnessing his funeral.

Mordecai looks miserable.

INT. HAMAN'S HOME - SAME DAY

Haman brushes the dirt from his clothes, humiliated. Not at all confident. His wife and friends crowd far away from him in another corner. They start to WAH-WAH. And leave.

HAMAN (V.O.)

They said the God of the Jews would  
destroy me. They faltered. But I  
stood firm. The chosen often stand  
alone.

(pause)

And I had been chosen for divine  
purpose.

Haman huddles in a corner, crying.

INT. KING'S COURT - DAY

Haman, escorted by royal guards, shuffles to his second banquet.

The King and Queen WAH-WAH for a moment. And the Queen stands and points at Haman who freezes, food falling from his mouth.

HAMAN (V.O.)

That day I learned... the Queen herself was a... Jew. And I would be accused of killing *her* people.

Xerxes stands, furious, and leaves the room.

HAMAN (V.O.)

In honorable endeavors, there is always sacrifice. I was to be that sacrifice. But... I faced my fate with dignity and trusted my gods.

Haman blubbers and turns to the Queen. He crawls practically into her lap, taking her hands, begging.

Xerxes returns and from his angle, it looks like Haman is trying to take advantage of the Queen.

Xerxes WAH-WAHs something and mimes what is clearly, "I want him dead!" A SERVANT near the window WAH-WAHs something and points.

Haman's gallows stand proud and tall for Xerxes to see.

Xerxes WAH-WAH's again, pointing from Haman to the gallows.

EXT. KING'S GATE - MOMENTS LATER

Haman stoic as he was in the first shot, now bursts into sobs and blubbers, with a rope around his neck.

He continues to blubber through his final monologue.

HAMAN (V.O.)

I am a vessel to the gods... chosen. I gave my life so many others may be saved... I may die today, but my decree will live on, ensuring the Jews--

THUMP, GROAN. He drops out of sight. The camera re-focuses on the DECREE tacked to a nearby post.

A WHIP of PAPER, THUNK THUNK.

The CAMERA pans down to a new one. "By order of Xerxes I, on the day Jews can be killed... they can also kill you."



EXT. SUSA - DAY

Lots of people fight each other but one group is winning.  
There's lots of blood.

SUPER TEXT: Ensuring the Jews live and become a cherished  
people under Xerxes and his son Artaxerxes.

PULL OUT TO REVEAL someone writing the story in a book. They  
flip a few pages back to the title. "The Story of ESTHER."  
The book is shut, revealing the cover: THE HOLY BIBLE.

THE END.